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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3603

June 2, 2014

Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

I urgently request that you use all official and personal channels of communication within your position as Secretary of State to seek the immediate release of Ms. Meriam Yahia Ibrahim Ishag, a Christian woman accused of apostasy in Sudan.

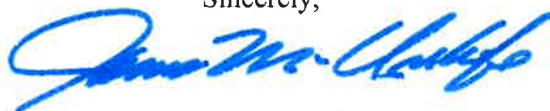
As you know, on May 15, 2014, a Sudanese court affirmed a sentence of death by hanging for the 27-year-old Ms. Ibrahim for apostasy for refusing to recant her Christian faith, and ordered her to receive 100 lashes for adultery because under Sudan's Shari'ah law such inter-religious marriages are illegal. Ibrahim was eight months pregnant at the time and is being held in the Omdurman Federal Women's Prison with her 20-month-old son. She has since delivered in prison a baby girl on May 26.

The Sudanese 1991 Criminal Code allows for death sentences for apostasy, stoning for adultery, cross-amputations for theft, prison sentences for blasphemy, and floggings for undefined acts of 'indecent'. According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom the number and severity of harsh Shari'ah-based judicial decisions in Sudan has increased since 2011, including sentences of amputation for theft and sentences of stoning for adultery.

I fear for the health and safety of Ms. Ibrahim, her husband and two children, despite statements by the government of Sudan that no sentence will be carried out until two years after the completion of her appeals. That is why 24 of my colleagues introduced S. Res. 453 on May 21 calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ms. Ibrahim and her children, encourages efforts by the United States Government to support religious freedom within Sudan and recognizes that every individual regardless of religion should have the opportunity to practice his or her religion without fear of discrimination. In addition, I ask that the Department of State explore granting Ms. Ibrahim and her family political asylum.

I ask you to use your powers of diplomacy to convince the Sudanese government to end this all too real and potentially deadly case of religious persecution.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator